



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Stephen Cochran, AICP, Case Manager
Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: January 22, 2013

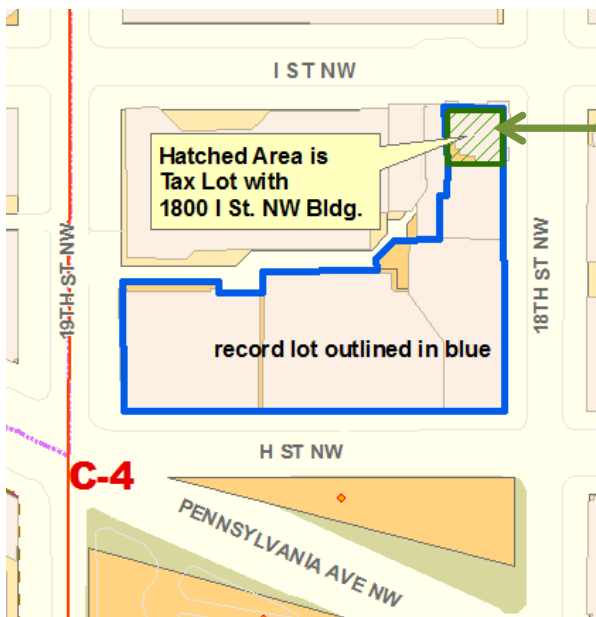
SUBJECT: BZA Case No.18493– 1800 I Street, NW -- Square 105, Lot 847 within Record Lot 62

I. OFFICE OF PLANNING (OP) RECOMMENDATION

OP recommend the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) approve the following requested FAR variances for a proposed renovation, court infill and partial story addition to an existing C-4 zoned office and retail building at 1800 I Street, NW.

Section	Topic	Permitted /Required	Existing	Proposed
771.2	FAR in C-4	8.5 FAR maximum	Tax Lot: 6.73 Record Lot: 10.0	Tax Lot: 7.61 Record Lot: 10.05
771.5	FAR for a C-4 building permitted greater than 110 feet in height.	10.0 FAR maximum	Tax Lot: 6.73 Record Lot: 10.0	Tax Lot: 7.61 Record Lot: 10.05

II. AREA AND SITE DESCRIPTION



SITE



Figures 1a & 1 b. Map and Picture of 1800 I Street, NW Tax Lot, Record Lot and Subject Building



Applicant: 1800 I St Associates LP		Legal Description: Square 105, Lot 847 -- one of five tax lots comprising record lot 062	
Address: 1800 I Street, NW		Ward: 2	ANC: 2B (06)
Zoning: C-4		Historic Preservation: n/a	
Lot Features	The essentially square 3,481 square foot site is on the southwest corner of 18 th and I Streets, NW and slopes approximately one-half story downward from the building’s northwest to southeast corner. The existing seven-story plus cellar building was constructed for residences in 1915 and was later converted to offices, with retail on the basement and cellar floors. The building and the tax lot on which it is constructed does not have alley access. Since 2003 the tax lot has shared agreements to re-subdivide property and re-allocate development rights with four other tax lots fronting on 18 th or H Streets, N.W. Together they comprise a record lot with H Street frontage across a federal reservation from Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., from which the record lot draws its 130 foot height and 10.0 FAR permissions.		
Adjacent Properties	High-rise office buildings with ground floor to the south; a historic three-story brick Federalist town-house structure immediately west-adjacent, followed by two more office buildings.		
Neighborhood Character	The area has been considered part of Washington’s commercial core for at least the last fifty years. Although there are remnant row house and apartment structures that are now used for offices and retail, the majority of nearby buildings are office buildings post-dating 1950.		
Proposal	The proposal would combine the cellar and basement levels of the 1800 I Street building into a more usable single and taller level of retail space. This would eliminate 2,275 square feet of gross floor area on the lowest levels, which would be recaptured by a new 2,275 square foot 8 th floor atop the existing roof. The total gross floor area on the tax lot and, hence, on the record lot, would be increased by 3,074 square feet by filling in the court behind existing floors 1 – 7 and new floor 8, and by relocating elevators and other service functions there to create more open office floorplates. The net of the reconfiguration would increase the FAR on tax lot 847 from 6.73 FAR to 7.61 FAR, and the overall FAR of the five buildings on the record lot from the maximum by-right 10 FAR to the proposed 10.05 FAR.		

Table 1. Information Summary

III. ZONING REQUIREMENTS and REQUESTED RELIEF

The applicant's tax lot has shared agreements since 2003 to re-subdivide property and re-allocate development rights with the four other tax lots comprising the record lot. The FAR relief is requested for the record lot. However, to enable a better understanding of the proposed project and the lots' zoning relationships, the following table presents information for both the record lot and for tax lot 847 as if it were independent of the record lot.

	Required / Permitted	Existing	Proposed	Relief Requested
Lot Area	none	<u>Tax Lot</u> : 3,482 sf <u>Record Lot</u> : 71,972 sf	No change	None
Lot Width	Not Specified	<u>Tax Lot</u> : 61 ft. <u>Record Lot</u> : 61ft. on I St.; full-blocks on H and 18 th Sts.	No change	None
Lot Occ.	100% for non-residential	<u>Tax Lot</u> : not supplied; less than 100% <u>Record Lot</u> : not supplied	<u>Tax Lot</u> : 100% <u>Record Lot</u> : No Change	None
FAR	<u>Tax Lot</u> : 8.5 <u>Record Lot</u> : 10.0 per Sec. 771.5	<u>Tax Lot</u> : 6.73 <u>Record Lot</u> : 10.0	<u>Tax Lot</u> : 7.61 <u>Record Lot</u> : 10.05	0.05 relief requested for Record Lot
Height	<u>Tax Lot</u> : 110' <u>Record Lot</u> : 130'	<u>Tax Lot</u> : not supplied. Approx. 78 ft. <u>Record Lot</u> : not supplied. Approx. 130 ft.	<u>Tax Lot</u> : not supplied. Approx. 92 ft. <u>Record Lot</u> : No Change	None
Parking	<u>Tax Lot</u> : pre-1958 bldg. <u>Record Lot</u> : 184	<u>Tax Lot</u> : None <u>Record Lot</u> : 186	<u>Tax Lot</u> : + 1 space <u>Record Lot</u> : no additional needed	None
Loading	<u>Tax Lot</u> : none for pre-1958 bldg <u>Record Lot</u> : not supplied	<u>Tax Lot</u> : None <u>Record Lot</u> : not supplied	<u>Tax Lot</u> : None <u>Record Lot</u> : No change	None
Rear Yard (for lot abutting 3 sts.)	<u>Tax Lot</u> : n/a <u>Record Lot</u> : Approx. 27 ft. from centerline of 85-ft. wide I St.	<u>Tax Lot</u> : n/a <u>Record Lot</u> : Approx. 42.5 ft.	No Change	None
Side Yard	None Required	0	0	None
Open Ct.	<u>Tax Lot</u> : None Required; At least 12 foot depth if provided <u>Record Lot</u> : ibid.	<u>Tax Lot</u> : existing court, dimensions not supplied <u>Record Lot</u> : existing courts, dimensions not supplied	<u>Tax Lot</u> : Court being eliminated <u>Record Lot</u> : 1 court being eliminated, 1 remaining	None
Closed Ct.	None required	n/a	n/a	None

Table 2. Zoning Requirements and Relief Requested.

Based on information supplied by the applicant

IV. OFFICE OF PLANNING ANALYSIS

A. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

- 1. Exceptional Situation**
- 2. Resulting in a Practical Difficulty if Relief is Not Granted**

In its original filing and its supplemental filing of January 15, 2012, the applicant has demonstrated that the 1915 former apartment building on Tax Lot 847 has exceptional conditions that would lead to a practical difficulty in renovating the building without the requested relief.

- The 100 year-old building was constructed for residential uses. Its existing structural system is partially dependent on support from external walls and former internal chimneys and its internal wall retain some of their original residential configurations.
- Because simple expansion of the existing core would result in an inefficient 30.3% core area and an inefficient floorplate, it is necessary to relocate the core elements to the perimeter by filling in the existing rear court with new elevators, accessible bathrooms, and other service equipment. This would increase the record lot's FAR by the 0.5 FAR for which relief is requested.

- 3. No Substantial Detriment to the Public Good**

No substantial detriment to the public good is anticipated from the Board's granting the requested relief. The proposed construction would contribute to ensuring the continued presence of a distinguished early 20th century building and would enable its owners to re-position it in an increasingly competitive downtown office market, without deleterious impacts on parking, bulk, shadows, etc. The reconfiguration of the street level space that would be enabled by the requested relief would also contribute to an improved pedestrian and retail environment.

- 4. No Substantial Harm to the Zoning Regulations**

The record lot has already achieved more than 10 FAR for buildings on some its five tax lots by averaging those buildings' FAR with the FAR of smaller buildings such as 1800 I Street, N.W. However, the requested relief is very small; the applicant has demonstrated that there are exceptional situations that would result in a practical difficulty if the relief were not granted; and there would not likely be a substantial detriment to the public if the relief were granted.

B. HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The property is not in a historic district or determined to be eligible for listing.

V. COMMENTS OF OTHER DISTRICT AGENCIES

OP is not aware of other agencies having filed or intending to file a report with the Office of Zoning.

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

ANC 2B voted unanimously on December 12, 2012 to support the relief request. OP is aware of no other filings.